



News From

JACK DOYLE

MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, October 2, 2001

DOYLE STRESSES IMPORTANCE OF FLU SHOTS FOR HIGH RISK INDIVIDUALS

UR and Wegmans Team to Host Large Public Sites

Monroe County Executive Jack Doyle today announced that flu shot clinics will begin October 3, 2001 throughout the county, but shots will initially be administered only to residents aged 65 and older or high-risk individuals. In addition, pneumococcal vaccine will be offered at most community clinics to further protect residents from severe complications from the flu. Residents may call **274-6189** for the locations of flu shot clinics in Monroe County.

"Although the flu vaccine supply is expected to surpass last year, federal health officials recommend that local providers take care of our most at-risk populations first," said Doyle. "Those at-risk people have chronic health problems such as heart or lung disease, or asthma. We ask that people who are not at high-risk of encountering complications from the flu wait until November for their shots."

The Community Nursing Center at the University of Rochester will partner with Wegmans Food Markets this year to conduct numerous large public clinics. Independent Nursing Care will hold clinics at VIX Pharmacies. The Monroe County Health Department will host numerous clinics in the City of Rochester and the county's Office for the Aging will offer smaller scale clinics at senior citizen centers.

Approximately 60% of this year's supply of vaccine should be shipped this month. An additional 30% will be shipped next month, with the remainder expected to arrive by mid-December. The delay is caused in part because there are now fewer manufacturers of flu vaccine.

"I applaud the Flu Coalition, who coordinate their efforts to safeguard the health of our most vulnerable residents," Doyle said. "Delays in the shipment of flu vaccine over the past two years have been particularly challenging and made the work of the coalition assume an even greater importance."

-more-

Flu shots/Page 2

A new flu shot is developed each year based upon the strains of flu expected to be circulating. Unlike many vaccinations, flu shots must be administered each year. Medicare and most HMOs cover the cost of receiving a flu shot.

The flu, or influenza, is a respiratory illness that is easily spread from person to person. Symptoms include: fever, sore throat, muscle ache, chills and headache. Peak influenza activity usually occurs from December through March. Approximately 20,000 people die from flu or its complications each year in the United States.

Preventive measures encouraged to reduce the risk of contracting the flu include:

- Cover mouth when sneezing or coughing
- Thorough and frequent hand washing with soap and water
- Stay home if ill with respiratory symptoms to prevent exposing others
- Pneumonia vaccine if aged 65 or over, or with chronic illness to prevent the most common and severe complications of the flu

The Flu Coalition is comprised of: Monroe County Departments of Health and Aging, Community Nursing Center at the University of Rochester, Wegmans Food Markets, Monroe County Medical Society, HCR, Lifetime Health, Center for the Study of Rochester's Health, Via Health Home Care, Independent Nursing Care, Aventis, and the Ontario County and New York State Health Departments.

#

*For further information, call:
Communications & Special Events at 428-2380
Visit us on the web: www.MonroeCounty.gov*